

Tennessee v. reeves



Tennessee v. Reeves. 917 S. W. 2d 825 (Supreme Court of Tennessee, 1996)

On January 5, 1993, Tracie Reeves and Molly Coffman, spoke on the telephone and decided to kill their homeroom teacher, Janice Geiger.

Reeves and Coffman were both twelve years old and were students at West Carroll Middle School. They planned that Coffman would bring rat poison to school the following days and it would be put in Geiger's drink. After that, the two would steal Geiger's vehicle and drive to the Smoky Mountains. On January 6, Coffman placed a packet of rat poison in her purse and got on the school bus. Coffman told another student, Christy Hernandez, of the plan.

Coffman showed her the poison in her purse. When Hernandez got to school she went and informed her homeroom teacher, Sherry Cockrill. Cockrill then informed the school principal, Claudia Argo. When Geiger entered her classroom that morning, she observed Reeves and Coffman leaning over her desk; and when the girls noticed her, they giggled and ran back to their seats. Geiger saw a purse lying next to her coffee cup on the top of the desk.

Shortly after Argo called Coffman to the principal's office, rat poison was found in Coffman's purse. Both Reeves and Coffman gave written statement to the Sheriff investigator concerning their plan to poison Geiger and steal her car. Reeves and Coffman were found to be delinquent by the Carroll County Juvenile Court, and both appealed from that ruling to the Carroll County Circuit Court. After a jury found that the girls attempted to commit second degree murder in violation of Tenn. Code Ann.

Section(s) 19-12-101, the " criminal attempt" statute, the trial court affirmed the juvenile court order and sentenced the girl to the Department of Youth

development for an indefinite period. The issue in this case is to determine whether the defendant's action in this case constitute a “ substantial step” toward the commission of second degree murder under the new statue.